

# INTERRACIAL REVIEW

A JOURNAL FOR CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY



## THE FRUSTRATION OF NEGRO ART

Theophilus Lewis

•

## THE CHRISTIAN CRISIS

John J. O'Connor

•

## "THIS WAS THE MAN!"

Thomas F. Gavin, S.J.

•

## WHY NOT NOW?

Editorial

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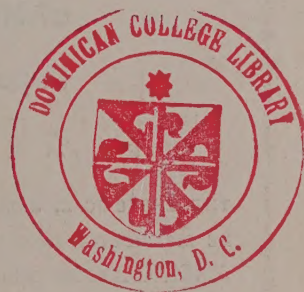
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April, 1942

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Castel Gandolfo, Oct. 27 (A.P.). — Pope Pius XII in the first Encyclical of his reign blamed "the denial of God" for leading the world to war and pleaded for peace today.

— *The New York Sun*

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**THE REGISTRAR**

# INTERRACIAL REVIEW

## Christian Democracy

Christian Democracy rejects artificial inequalities due to racial myths, material greed or physical violence and recognizes only such accidental inequalities as necessarily accompany human life at all times and in all places.

As the objective of the Catholic interracial program, we define Christian Democracy as a society in which the God-given dignity and destiny of every human person is fully recognized, in laws, government, institutions and human conduct.

## POSTULATES

- The Catholic Interracial Program has a twofold aim: (1) the combating of race prejudice; (2) the attainment of social justice for the whole social group regardless of race.

- "Nothing does more harm to the progress of Christianity and is more against its spirit than . . . race prejudice amongst Christians. — There is nothing more widely spread in the Christian world." — *Jacques Maritain*

- "From the evidence on hand today, we cannot scientifically prove that the Nordic or the Negro is superior or inferior, one to the other." — *Rev. John M. Cooper*

- The interracial problem is the greatest world problem of today. It is the major threat to international peace. In America the interracial problem is one of grave national concern. It is perhaps the biggest problem confronting the Catholic Church in America.

- "Intolerance towards Negroes in the United States is perhaps the acme of the racial intolerance of modern nationalism." — *Carlton J. H. Hayes*

- The spiritual aspect of the Catholic interracial program flows from the common membership of all races in the Mystical body of Christ and the common expression of this unity in the Church's liturgy.

- Prejudice on the part of Catholic laity is a barrier to the conversion of the Negro and a trial to the new found Faith of the Negro convert.

- "We must concede that the natural rights of the Negro are identical in number and sacredness to the rights of white persons." — *Rev. Francis J. Gilligan, S.T.D.*

- Catholic principles maintaining the equality of all men and upholding the sanctity of the Negro's natural rights, impose upon all Catholics a rule of conduct which must be followed, regardless of any temporary inconveniences, apprehensions or difficulties that may be encountered.

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## INTERRACIAL REVIEW

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## The Interracial Field

INTERESTING STATISTICS

Number of Negroes in U. S.....	13,000,000
Estimated Number of Protestant Negroes...	5,000,000
Estimated Number of Catholic Negroes.....	300,000
Estimated Number Unchurched.....	7,750,000
Number of Negroes Attending Colleges ....	23,038

Number of Catholic Negro Churches.....	282
Number of Catholic Negro Schools.....	263
Negro Enrollment in Catholic Schools.....	50,000
Priests Engaged in Colored Missions.....	450
Sisters Engaged in Colored Missions.....	1,600

Negroes in New York City .....	478,346
Negroes in Chicago .....	233,000
Negroes in Philadelphia.....	219,000
Negroes in Washington.....	132,068

### Treating the Colored Man Right

*"The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,  
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel."*

The Negroes are our friends, their adoption has been tried in this land of ours for three generations since their emancipation, if not for three centuries since their introduction to the "land of the free." There remains only the duty of "grappling them to ourselves." We can do it now. By and by it may be too late.

I hope my remarks about the argument from expediency will not be taken as evidence that I think that argument altogether contemptible. It is, as I have said, a low-grade argument, but there are American citizens who cannot be moved with an ethical, or still less a religious argument. I have learned that fact both in conversation and in written correspondence. I cannot pretend to be shocked (I am not so naive), but I have been again and again pained to notice that a good many church-going people instantaneously reject any plea based upon religion for the extirpation of race prejudice. They will not say point-blank that Christ or the Gospel upholds race prejudice, but they dodge the religious issue and appeal, like the veriest unbelievers, to custom and feeling and expediency. I suppose we should give them in return an argument from expediency while waiting and praying for them to grow into a realization of supremacy of the supernatural.—Rev. James M. Gillis, C.S.P.

## This Month and Next

JOHN J. O'CONNOR, professor of history at St. John's University and former editor of *The Commonwealth*, is the author of an outstanding paper "The Christian Crisis." Mr. O'Connor is a charter member of the Irish-American Committee for Interracial Justice . . . We are indebted to the editor of *The Catholic World* for permission to reprint an important article by Theophilus Lewis, associate editor and dramatic critic of the Review . . . MR. THOMAS F. GAVIN, S.J., a scholastic in theology at Woodstock, Md., contributes a true story that has a full quota of human interest.

### Progress in New Orleans

*As reported in the "New Orleans Sentinel"*

New Orleans, Mar. 20.—A school to train 5,000 welders to help Higgins Industries, Inc., fill Government orders for ships at the rate of twenty-four per month, will be established in this city, according to George W. Rappelyea, executive assistant to the President of the Higgins Company. Both white and Negro youths will be trained and will be employed without regard to race or color, his statement intimated. It is expected that employment will be given to 40,000 men.

New Orleans, April 4.—According to a statement of Clarence A. Laws, Secretary of the Urban League, the outlook for jobs for Negroes in New Orleans is probably brighter than ever before.

A series of conferences with representatives of Higgins Industries Inc., and representatives of labor unions, reveal that thousands of Negroes will be trained in skills essential to shipbuilding, and that both the unions and the company plan to utilize this labor resource.

Credit for the change in racial policy of both manager and labor in New Orleans was attributed to representatives of the War Production Board and the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice.

"The success for removing barriers," Mr. Laws stated, "must go in a large measure to Mr. George W. Streater, field representative of the labor division of the War Production Board . . . Mr. Streater worked night and day on this problem until it finally seems to be cleared up."

# INTERRACIAL REVIEW

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APRIL, 1942

No. 4

## WHY NOT NOW?

The announcement by Secretary Knox that Negroes will be accepted for enlistment in "reserve components" of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard is a step in the right direction. But it is only a step. Perhaps the order is a forerunner of other forward steps, indicating that in time all the present barriers to Negro enlistment and promotion will be removed.

At a time when every conceivable move is being made to bring about an all-out effort for victory this modified policy appears to be piecemeal and to have been reluctantly and grudgingly granted. It is another concession to the popular demand that restrictive racial traditions be set aside for the common good and as a matter of justice.

The position taken by the Negro is both logical and justified. He expects that his rights as a citizen will be respected. He desires to share all the rights and the responsibilities of citizenship to the same extent

as all other Americans. He expects that Negroes will be permitted to serve in all branches of the armed forces to help defend and preserve democracy and the democratic way of life.

It must not be forgotten that, up to now, the Navy barred Negroes from service except as mess boys. There should be no barrier, based on color. Nor should qualified Negroes seeking to enter the air force be excluded from major training fields in different parts of the country and be segregated in the small training base at Tuskegee. It has been estimated that more than 100,000 air pilots will be needed to man the tens of thousands of planes now in production. Today less than 100 Negro pilots are in training.

We have no doubt that these barriers too will be removed—little by little. Eventually the demand for additional man power in the Army and the Navy will compel the abandonment of racial restrictions upon America's war effort. Eventually, yes. But why not

now? It should be done immediately in the interest of national unity and morale. It should be done because in a democracy the rights and responsibilities of all citizens must be shared by all on the basis of equality.

## And Grab Hold of Something

The *Baltimore Evening Sun* for April 13 carried the story of the Negro tenants on a farm near Talladega, Alabama. Government acquisition of land for a defense project in that section has taken two of the country's oldest settlements. On the farm of H. H. Cook, white landowner, were fifteen or sixteen Negro families. The young men and their families, said Cook in an interview, came to him "crying and begging for a place to stay . . . Right when this thing happened a bunch of them come to me and wanted me to buy a big place somewhere off, in Texas or some place, and said they'd follow me. If I'd been a younger man I'd done that. But I'm too old to start over again. I haven't the heart to do it."

This charitably minded landlord helped his former tenants get war time jobs. "I carried six of them up to the union and joined them up." He got some of them located on a small farm he had elsewhere; he did what he humanly could. But it was little indeed, in view of the dislocation that has set adrift white and colored landowner alike, creating a common problem, emphasizing once more that the economic interests of the two races and of all the races are fundamentally the same.

In Saint Mary's County, Maryland, the new Cedar Point naval and air base has taken over some 6,000 acres of territory. From this section practically all the Negro families and some white families attended historic St. Nicholas Catholic Church, near Pearson, Md. Eighty white and twenty-eight colored land owners are obliged to move. Some of the Negro families leave small properties, conveniently located to church, school, stores, community hall, main highways, which they have inherited from parents and grandparents. Some must relinquish large and well developed farms in a good farming area.

There is no complaint as to the project itself. This is vitally needed in an area vitally concerned in our country's defense. The effect on the local population

is a casualty of the war. None the less, it is disconcerting to know that people who have resisted the drive to the city, resisted the temptation to become migrants, who are sober, industrious, laborious citizens, who cling to their church, school, community, are suddenly obliged to adjust themselves as best they may to a totally new world.

In Alabama, Negroes displaced in various places said they hoped to keep on farming somewhere, somehow.

"All my family likes to work," explained one member of a leading Negro land-owner family in the Alabama region. "We likes to plow and we likes to hoe and we likes to spread our arms and grab hold of something."

While the high wages offered by the Government projects relieves some immediate distress, it creates new problems for the present and raises forebodings for the future.

Grievous as these developments are, they may bear good fruit in drawing attention to certain much neglected truths.

1.—They show the folly of neglecting to arrive at a practical solution of the farm problem for the small farmer; one which will relieve him of dependence upon the big farmer; and relieve the big farmer of dependence upon tenantry. In other words, the deplorable condition of the dispossessed Negroes points to the need of a widely distributed land ownership into which the dispossessed family could easily fit in one place, when forced to leave another. At present they must take pot-luck in a disorganized rural community.

2.—They reveal, also the great importance of the work of the Federal Farm Security Administration, to which attention has frequently been called in this Review. Here is a direct challenge to the resourcefulness of the F.S.A., as well as a reply to its detractors in Congress.

3.—The developments show, finally, the extreme urgency of the question of post-war employment. In the case of those families who do manage to benefit by the new projects, what will become of them when the projects come to an end.

4.—Finally, as already stated, these dislocations reveal the common interest of black man and white man the country over, North and South, East and West. A genuinely interracial program will take this

into account, and urge all to work together that a plan be worked out based not upon mere survival of ancient traditions, nor yet upon temporary and tempting jobs, but upon permanent human values. The greater the prospect of a secure social order after the war, the surer will be the war effort.

## Paradox in Baltimore

Not humanitarian motives, but stern necessity, will drive the nation to see the folly of discriminating against Negro workers in the defense industries.

Ten companies, all in the Chicago or Milwaukee area, holding millions of dollars in war contracts were ordered on April 12 by the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice to stop discriminating against workers on account of race or religion. Companies involved in the Chicago area are the Stewart-Warner Corporation, the Buick aviation plant at Melrose, Ill., the Bearse Manufacturing Company, the Simpson Manufacturing Company and the Studebaker branch factory. In the Milwaukee area, the Nordberg Manufacturing Company, A. O. Smith Corporation, Heil Company, Allis-Chalmers Corporation and the Harnischfeger Corporation. If they do not comply with the order, they are liable to claims of contract violations and fines or, in severe cases not involving war materials, suspension of the contract.

How plainly unreasonable is such refusal of employment to a skilled worker on the ground of his race or color alone, is stated by the Baltimore *Evening Sun* for April 13. (Note that we have quoted this same issue in another connection). "In Baltimore," says the *Sun*, "we are confronted with a paradox. On the one hand, there is a desperate need of skilled workers in the war industries. On the other hand, practically no attention has been given to the training and use of Negroes for these jobs."

Spokesmen for the 167,000 Negroes in Baltimore, says the *Evening Sun*, have complained from the very beginning that their race has been virtually excluded from participation in the defense program (now the war program), or has at best been tossed a few crumbs. Many thousands of Negroes in that city who could master the skilled techniques are being kept in the unskilled classes, or at best advanced merely to semi-skilled jobs. In the Baltimore area, says the

*Sun*, "there are in fact only three large war industries which offer employment as a skilled or semi-skilled workman to Negroes. These are the Bethlehem Steel Company, the Edgewood Arsenal and the Glenn L. Martin Company . . . At none of the other big war industries of Baltimore is the door open to Negroes in skilled occupations. And in only two other industries, of twenty-three which were canvassed by the Baltimore Urban League earlier this year, were more than 100 Negroes employed in any capacity."

We take the position that employment, whether of Negroes or white men or Jews or Christians or any other type of people, should not be the result of dire necessity but a matter of ordinary justice, which disregards irrelevant and artificial distinctions. But dire need may help to open to reality the eyes of those who otherwise are blind. The reality is, that the nation needs the skilled Negro not only in war, but in peace as well; that the racial objections urged are unreal, and the sooner we forget them the better.

## Salute to Dorie Miller

As truly as nature abhors a vacuum does your inquiring reporter abhor a hero without a name. Nor was the reading public content merely to know that an unknown Negro messman serving on the U. S. S. Arizona had manned a machine gun on the bridge during the Pearl Harbor attack. Letters poured into the Navy Department demanding to know who this man was.

Belatedly, on March 5, the answer came. He was Dorie Miller, a native of Waco, Texas, who in 1939 joined the Navy in the only capacity in which he could serve and was still in that humble category when out of the fury that broke loose over the Arizona he emerged a hero of such conspicuous gallantry that Congress is now asked to bestow upon him the Congressional Medal of Honor.

"In company with two officers and several enlisted men," the Navy Department reported, "Miller was on the bridge of a battleship when the commanding officer of the vessel received a fatal abdominal wound. While the others sought to construct a stretcher to lower the captain to a safer location, a Naval Reserve Lieutenant and Miller manned a pair of machine guns and fired upon the attacking planes until fires started by bombs rendered the machine guns useless."

Curious, indeed, that months should elapse before this Negro messboy could be identified by name. Was there a premonition in high Navy circles that the dark Texan had done something more than respond to a demand for supreme courage? Tradition banned the training of Negroes as combatants. Until that fateful December morning, Miller had never manned a machine gun.

"We know none of the details of his (Miller's) life," declared Wendell L. Willkie at a dinner gathering at Freedom House, "except that single fine act of judgment and self-sacrificing courage. But there's one fact we know positively and exactly: he cannot enlist in the United States Navy and only for the reason that he was born with a black skin."

Apart from what effect the action of Dorie Miller may have had in somewhat modifying the Navy's policy of discrimination, there can be no question that the story of his heroism adds another bright page to the long race of Negro patriotism.

Merely to preface the citation of his gallantry by the statement that after two years' service and solely because of his color, Dorie Miller was still only a messboy is to sound a valid protest. It is to challenge that species of American who, even in the face of mounting proofs to the contrary, clings to the notion that the Negro is not qualified to occupy that status in our democracy to which not merely his courage, but his skill, his industrial capacity and his art and scholarship, eminently qualify him.

Dorie Miller, by his courage at Pearl Harbor, has effectively exposed the fallacy underlying the Naval tradition of racial discrimination.

## Irish-American Committee

"Nothing in a long time has happened in the whole field of race relations which is so completely gratifying as the formation in the city of New York of the Irish-American Committee for Interracial Justice."—Editorial—*Opportunity*.

"Perhaps one of the most spontaneous and significant developments is the formation of the Irish-American Committee for Interracial Justice headed by a number of distinguished New York judges and Irish leaders, already spreading to other cities."

Editorial—*The Commonwealth*

## Notes From XAVIER UNIVERSITY

*The First Catholic College for Negro Youth*

### WAR EFFORT

The faculty and student body at Xavier are engaged in a whole-hearted effort to do everything in their power to help win the war. The administration has announced several important changes in the Academic program. In January, members of the faculty entered first-aid and civilian defense classes and have already qualified as instructors, prepared to teach in different parts of the city. Members of the senior classes are also engaged in teaching first-aid. Members of the Faculty and the student body are purchasing defense bonds and stamps which are available on the University campus. The University boasts of an excellent civilian defense unit. The department includes: fire, police, health service, and maintenance. They are headed by Faculty members assisted by students.

The young women of the University have sponsored many informal gatherings, dances, and socials for the entertainment of the men in the armed forces. Besides these campus activities a number of the students have participated in U.S.O. programs conducted in the several nearby army camps.

The University is to sponsor two band concerts to be given by the University military band at Jefferson Barracks and at the Air Base in New Orleans. The choral ensemble of the Xavier School of Music took part recently in a Naval Relief program which was broadcast over a nation-wide radio hookup. The students from Newcomb College of Tulane University and the Xavierites were the only collegians to appear on this program which was broadcast by the Roosevelt Hotel over Station WWL.

Many Xavier graduates and students have joined the armed forces and many Xavierites are working in important branches of the Government.

Recently the University stadium was the scene of an exhibition of civilian defense activities conducted for the benefit of the citizens of New Orleans. Everyone at Xavier is "all out" in the effort to win the war.

# THE CHRISTIAN CRISIS

By JOHN J. O'CONNOR

A great many people today are very much concerned with this supremely important question: Can Christianity save the modern world? The answer we hear most frequently is in the negative. The opinion is expressed that it is already too late and that Christianity, as it is constituted at present, is powerless to re-order and heal and inspire our largely bankrupt civilization.

There is admittedly much to be said for this pessimistic point of view.

During the past hundred years the Papacy issued repeated warnings against the drift towards chaos. The world paid little attention to those prophetic utterances. Today, although we are deeply involved in that long-predicted chaos, the unrepentant modern world stubbornly refuses to pay much attention to the Father of Christendom. In view of this deep-rooted antagonism, how can Christianity even hope to put things in order again?

The Christian spirit and the American spirit are being tested, as perhaps never before, in the iron crucible of a global war. We have bungled badly in the past. We are living on a day to day basis. The future is shrouded in mystery. But this much is certain. Despair would be the supremely non-Christian act. If we reflect but a moment, we will come to the realization that there has been no complete blackout of endurance, or courage, or piety, or faith. The Christian still sees, beyond the stark and awful eminence of Golgotha, the Master of Time and Eternity, the Resurrection and the Life. God is in His heaven, even if all is not well on our pain-racked and blood-soaked earth.

My answer to barbarism in all its hideous forms, to



paganism and materialism in all their revolting and blasphemous manifestations, to pessimism, defeatism and despair, is the answer of a valiant Christian woman, so excellently portrayed in an Irish novel by Francis McManus. On her death bed and out of the ripe and mellow wisdom of many golden years, she said to those around her: "Stand and give challenge! Until the last day of your life, you must struggle and fight. Do not yield—there is no defeat. Stand and give challenge!"

It is easy to repeat the valiant words of a valiant Christian woman. It is not easy to live them. Yet they are being lived today in heroic fashion in many parts of the world—in Germany and Poland, in France and the Netherlands, in Russia and on the Batan peninsula in the Philippines. And to those who are inclined to minimize the achievements of the Papacy in the past, at least this can be said: The Papacy did not surrender. It did not yield to either threats or blandishments. Generation after generation it gave challenge to the forces of evil. The fight is not yet over. The heresies of the past are one by one crumbling away into nothingness. And the one unconquerable army in the world today is the army of Catholic Action.

During the past century the Church had to endure all manner of persecution. For that reason it does seem a bit unfair to demand salvation from the very same divine institution that is being crucified.

Another barrier to the efforts of Christianity in seeking to re-order and renew our civilization has undoubtedly been the inferiority complex which somehow fastened itself on Christians like a leech, and the self-constructed ghetto in which Christians have voluntarily huddled, not daring to brave a quasi-hostile or maliciously patronizing world.

Finally, it might be said that the Church has journeyed through the centuries bearing as the heaviest of her trials, and the greatest hindrance to her success, the daily shame of her unworthy members. In the past century the reactionary policies of many Catholics in both the political and social spheres have added to the weight of the trials under which the Church has been forced to labor.

The type of Christianity which I have just briefly described is certainly not the hope of the future. Isolated, reactionary, status quo, stick-in-the-mud, ostrich-like Christianity isn't going to save the modern world. But that is not the type of Christianity which is truly representative of the Church today.

The genuine spirit of contemporary Christianity is the spirit which is coming to grips with that very serious contemporary problem—the problem of racism.

Race conflicts are among the most important factors in the totality of political and social unrest in the modern world, and their significance increases as racial feeling grows in emotional activity. Such conflicts had their origin, historically, in the migration of races and in the conquest of territories already inhabited by other races. Most sociologists hold that States were founded upon migration and conquest, and

that in organizing society the conquering race constituted itself the ruling class while the conquered peoples were relegated to an inferior, servant status. Race therefore became a factor of social superiority. The philosophers of the ruling race soon made it appear to be also a factor of moral and intellectual superiority as well as of political capacity. The members of the ruling or conquering race, who had all the opportunities for social and cultural development which they denied to the members of the conquered race, came to think of themselves as alone capable, by nature or by the will of God, of providing political and social leadership in the interests of the subservient races.

With the swift ascent to power of Hitler's government in Germany in 1933, the theory of racial superiority became the official doctrine of the Third Reich. Nazi racial theories, of world-wide scope and influ-



## INTERRACIAL COMMUNION BREAKFAST

*Speakers at the pre-St. Patrick's Day Communion Breakfast, sponsored by the Catholic Laymen's Union and the Irish American Committee for Interracial Justice, included Hon. John P. O'Brien, former Mayor of New York; Hon. Joseph T. Ryan, Chief Justice, New York City Court; Dr. Edward E. Best, Associate Editor of the Review; John J. O'Connor, Professor of History, St. John's University; and Rev. John LaFarge, S.J.*

ence, have stirred racial pride and prejudice to feverish heat and have become an almost insurmountable obstacle to peaceful and progressive solution of race conflicts.

Pope Pius XI, in his Encyclical Letter on *The Present Position of the Catholic Church in the German Empire*, specifically condemned the racist myth. "Whoever," he said, "exalts race, or the people, or the State, or a particular form of State, or the depositories of power, or any other fundamental value of the human community—however necessary and honorable be their function in worldly things—whoever raises these motions above their standard value and divinizes them to an idolatrous level, distorts and perverts an order of the world planned and created by God: he is far from the true faith in God and from the concept of life which that faith upholds."

Pope Pius XII likewise condemned the racist theory. In his Encyclical Letter on *The Unity of Human Society*, he denounced racism as a pernicious error rooted in "the forgetfulness of that law of human solidarity and charity which is dictated and imposed by our common origin and by the equality of rational nature in all men, to whatever people they belong, and by the redeeming Sacrifice offered by Jesus Christ on the Altar of the Cross to His Heavenly Father on behalf of sinful mankind."

Racism contradicts the spiritual and Christian concept of the human person. It is likewise contrary to scientific truth, since it is founded upon the false social theory which holds that people's psychology, even their moral traits, are necessarily determined by their physical inheritance.

This detestable myth does not exist only in Germany, or only in Europe. It flourishes here in the United States, and has long flourished here, at the expense of 13 million loyal American citizens. Today the Negro faces innumerable restrictions, denials and discriminations in violation of his natural rights, as a man and as a citizen. He is still seeking to secure the essential opportunities of life and the full measure of social justice.

The participation in the interracial movement by so many men and women of Irish birth or ancestry is positive proof of that dynamic spirit of contemporary Christianity to which I have referred. We not only challenge racism. We not only condemn it. We

pledge ourselves to fight it with every honest and legitimate weapon until we have finally licked this infamous thing. We will not bow the knee to Hitler. We will not tolerate racism in America. We will not subscribe to the crack-brained racist illusion by which Hitler and his Nazi henchmen hope to divide and conquer the world.

In his Encyclical Letter to the American Hierarchy on the *Progress and Problems of the American Church*, Pius XII confessed that he felt "a special paternal affection, which is certainly inspired by Heaven, for the Negro people dwelling among you; for in the field of religion and education We know that they need special care and comfort and are very deserving of it. We therefore invoke an abundance of heavenly blessing and We pray fruitful success for those whose generous zeal is devoted to their welfare."

The Irish in America experienced unjust discriminations. For that reason we can enter into the problems of the Negro with courage and patience and understanding and that unquenchable zeal for justice which is bred in our bones.

The Catholic Interracial Program has a twofold aim:

(a) to combat prejudice, as the specific enemy of interracial justice; and

(b) to establish social justice for all groups and classes, as the necessary condition for just and charitable relations between the races.

It hopes to accomplish these aims, first, by prayer, by interracial participation in the Church's liturgical life, with the explicit aim of showing forth the unity and variety of the Mystical Body of Christ.

Secondly, by personal example of one's own parish, office, class-room and work-bench.

Thirdly, by the systematic education of the public in the rights and wrongs of race relations.

This simple, clear-cut program deserves and will receive the wholehearted and enthusiastic support of us all.

And so I return to the question with which I began: Can Christianity Save the Modern World? My answer is: It all depends on us, upon our zeal, courage, energy and determination to live a Christlike life, to manifest Christ to all men, regardless of race or class.

The Irish-American Committee for Interracial Justice is at the same time an achievement and a pledge of future action.

# THE FRUSTRATION OF NEGRO ART

By THEOPHILUS LEWIS

AN aspect of American color prejudice that is rarely mentioned when the subject is being discussed is its vitiating influence on Negro art. The reasons why Negro leaders and sympathetic white people neglect that phase of interracial friction are by no means obscure or difficult to understand. The injustices caused by race prejudice are conspicuous in the fields of employment, education, political and civil rights, its consequences are too often apparent in statistics of crime. One would hardly expect a colored youth who encountered discrimination at the factory door or in the reception office of a university to be greatly concerned about the effect of prejudice on the production of water colors by Negro painters—unless in the latter instance, the youth happened to be an art student.

It requires a great deal of temerity to assert precisely which form of race oppression is most pernicious. One will hardly hesitate, however, to declare that damage to the material interests of a race is less serious than injury to its soul. The highest expressions of the soul are religion and art. Referring to the group rather than its individual members, one might even maintain that art is the soul of a people. It is the residue of beauty that remains after the spirits of the individuals who created it have passed on to other worlds, even after the group has ceased to exist. The power and wealth of nations do not necessarily win them a high place in history.

While other aspects of race prejudice are more bitter and may seem more crucial at the moment, in the long view it would be difficult to exaggerate the seriousness of the indirect but diabolically effective repression of Negro art.

Most of the world's first-rate art was originally produced for a local audience. Immortal Greek drama, for instance, was written for the edification of the citizens of Athens. The Negro spirituals, to step down from fine to folk art, were first sung to express sincere religious fervor in plantation meeting houses. Both the Greek masters and illiterate black bards plumbed deeply enough into the souls of their respective races to strike a universal human note. If contemporary Negro artists are to produce distinguished work, they must address their talents to the pleasure

of a Negro audience, not to Broadway first nighters or the clients of the Literary Guild.

Under normal conditions of creative effort the Negro artist would produce for an enlightened minority of his race with enough culture to appreciate, enough leisure to enjoy and enough money to buy the pictures, music, fiction or whatever he creates in his chosen medium. But Negroes of that description are not numerous enough to support an artist class. It is doubtful, for instance, that the total number of colored college graduates exceeds thirty thousand, many of them earning a living polishing spittoons in white men's saloons or polishing silver in white women's pantries. Only a handful of them can purchase the books they want to read or attend the plays they want to see, virtually none of them can afford to sit for a portrait. This condition compels colored artists to work under a handicap seldom borne by creative spirits of other races, the lack of an appreciative and paying public able to support them according to their merit.

No exhaustive research is required to discover why the Negro culture level does not cover a broad enough base to sustain an indigenous art. It is because the Negroes are excluded from the larger economic life of the nation as ruthlessly as Jews are being weeded out of the economy of Europe. Perhaps not as ruthlessly, but quite as effectively.

The economic disadvantages of Negroes, encountered in every gainful occupation from domestic service to engineering, act as a definite brake on the cultural progress of the race. In all except an almost negligible minority of colored families the struggle for mere survival is so severe that creative talent in young children is either unnoticed or mistaken for aberration or chronic illness. When talent is recognized there is usually no money available for its development. Only the embryo artist blessed with exceptional perseverance has a possible chance of winning recognition, or, if he is lucky, attracting the attention of a patron or one of the foundations which dispense fellowships.

Lacking an effective audience in his own race, the colored artist is forced to court the favor of the white public. He finds the door of opportunity open for

him much wider than it is for his brother seeking employment in industry or the business world, but quickly discovers that white people have rather definite ideas about how a colored artist should employ his talent.

Now the artist may reverence the spirituals as hymns and appreciate their significance as folk songs, but he naturally resents singing them under duress. Imagine a white artist presented with a similar ultimatum. Lawrence Tibbett sings "On the Road to Mandalay" with splendid verve and abandon. Nevertheless he would certainly resist any audience pressure to type him as a ballad singer.

The plight of Negro musicians, while they must continually resist the efforts of critics and audiences to push them into a groove, is an enviable one compared with the difficulties of other colored artists. Musicians start with the initial advantage of receiving a great deal of support and appreciation within their own race than, say poets or painters. There are many large churches with good choirs which develop soloists, organists and choral groups. Occasionally a church will help a talented young student along with his musical education.

Negro music is firmly rooted in the cultural life of the race and keeps pace with its progress. Within the relative security of their own society colored musicians are free to experiment and improvise, and even free to be stilted and artificial. The progress of Negro music, from spirituals to symphonies, has been normal and healthy, a faithful reflection of the cultural advance of the race. That is the reason why Negro musicians have made a larger and more vital contribution to our national culture than their brother artists.

While music is the most original of Negro arts, drama is the most artificial. The race is obviously rich in dramatic experience and has produced numerous individuals of high histrionic talent. But the combination of poignant racial experience and amplitude of acting talent to interpret it have not produced a theater that even remotely approaches the maturity of the American Yiddish theater. Indeed, the Negro theater is probably even less mature than the Chinese theater in America. If the comparison seems exaggerated, the reader might try to imagine what he would answer if he were on a quiz program and the master of ceremonies should ask him to name five

Negro plays that can be seriously rated with, say, *Golden Boy* or *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*. If the m. c. wanted to be an old meanie and make the question a real brain buster, he might ask his victim to name three intelligible plays written by Negro authors. Fumbling for the answers would reveal the appalling barrenness of the Negro theater.

One can conclude, of course, that the sterility of the Negro theater is evidence of a dearth of dramatic talent in the race. But that facile conclusion will hardly stand up under examination. The theater begins with the actor, and Negroes have produced brilliant actors far in excess of requirements of the American stage. Richard B. Harrison, star of *The Green Pastures*, was a roving elocutionist until he was an old man, and played only one legitimate role in his life. Frank Wilson was a letter carrier approaching middle age when his chance came to play the lead in *Porgy*. Ethel Waters was forced to entertain musical show and night-club jitterbugs for twenty years before being given a dramatic role in *Mamba's Daughters*. Charles Gilpin, who created the title role in *The Emperor Jones*, spent most of his life playing in obscure stock companies and clowning in smelly nickelodeons.

Those are a few who finally won recognition. It would not be at all difficult to name scores of talented performers who never get a break. Evelyn Ellis might be cited as an instance. Miss Ellis is now playing a minor role in *Native Son*. Twenty-five years ago Miss Ellis was a sparkling ingenue, fully as capable as the average Broadway leading woman, probably the equal of some stars. But opportunities to exercise her ability have been few and far between. Hosts of competent colored performers have met with similar frustration. Their own race has not reached the economic level which makes the stage a cultural necessity. The white theater can employ them only once in a lifetime.

Talented Negroes with a bent toward creative literature are confronted with a similar dilemma. The great absorbing interests of Negroes are the same as those of all other races, religion, love, ambition, acquisitiveness, the struggle for survival and racial aspiration. Under normal conditions those would be the themes of Negro fiction. But Negroes do not, in fact cannot, buy enough books to make it worthwhile for publishers to consider their reading preferences. The colored author who wants to get his manuscript ac-

cepted must cater to the tastes of white readers. He cannot portray Negro character as he has observed it or interpret Negro life as he has experienced it. He must make his interpretation of Negro life conform to what white people think Negroes are and how they act.

"Negro writers have assumed superiority over their low-life characters," says J. Saunders Redding. "They have assumed for themselves, individually, equality with the white race, poking desperately self-conscious fun at the minstrel Negro, in the manner of Irvin Cobb and Roy Cohen. They have assumed the white intellectual's point of view in dealing with Negroes as Carl Van Vechten deals with them." This condition, so aptly described by Mr. Redding, makes the healthy progress of Negro fiction impossible.

The situation, as it stands, seems insoluble. Publishers cannot be expected to accept stories they cannot sell, nor can white readers be expected to read books they do not like. The progress of the Negro literature, except in the field of interracial polemics, must wait on the emergence of a Negro reading class able to appreciate and support a corps of writers producing exclusively for their own race.

Next to music, poetry is the most mature of Negro arts. Poetry, along with music and dancing, is usually one of the earliest arts developed in a racial culture, following close after religion as a mode of spiritual expression. Without them a race can hardly be said to possess a group culture. Poetry is an economical art, too, requiring no complicated and expensive social machinery for its dissemination. Unlike drama, which requires the collaboration of two major arts and several minor ones, and fiction, which must be serviced by the intricate and highly financed publishing business, poetry can be delivered to a sizable audience by the poet's unaided efforts.

Negro poets began to appear before the Revolutionary War, and their number has increased ever since. Even before the emancipation they had produced a formidable body of verse, virtually all of which expressed the aspirations of their own people. By their sincerity, Negro poets have won a wide audience among their white compatriots and, next to musicians, have made a more substantial contribution to the general culture of the nation than other colored artists.

In three arts, music, poetry and acting, Negroes

have amply demonstrated the imaginative fertility of the race. With only an ill-supported and imitative theater to serve as a training ground, the race has produced a galaxy of superior actors. Negroes are producing symphonies without symphony orchestras. We can hardly be expected to perform the miracle of creating mature painting or a living literature until an expanding culture causes a demand for those arts within the race. There is a limit to our ingenuity.

## "THIS WAS THE MAN!"

By THOMAS F. GAVIN, S.J.

AN ancient gentleman with deep-set eyes, shaggy brows and a flowing white beard. That's what you would expect. Actually he looked like a pullman porter. As a matter of fact he was a pullman porter. Yet if I ever met a true sage, "a venerable man, sound in judgment," this was he. We met but once, in the summer of 1932 on the train to New York.

I had just left home. As the last "all aboard" rang through the station my parents had wept. It was the first time I had ever seen tears in their eyes and the sight was my own undoing. Up to that moment youth and the exciting prospect of a new life had pretty well crowded occasional misgivings into the background. But as the train gave its first, conclusive lurch it jolted things into a new and frightening focus. In a sudden, sickening moment I knew what it meant to "leave house, and father, and mother." It was the darkest moment of my twenty-one years.

The engine was sniffing cautiously through the maze of yard-tracks when this white-coated, black-faced porter took the seat opposite me. Neither of us spoke. After a while he asked what the trouble was. I told him that I had just left home to study for the priesthood.

He nodded. He had been standing near-by and had seen me say good-bye to my parents. Settling back in the seat, he reflected for a moment and said, "But, son, you shouldn't be upset at seeing your mother cry."

If anything, I had expected sympathy and was puzzled and, as I recall it, a trifle indignant that he should even mildly question my right to grief. I asked what he meant.

"Well," he explained, "if you had given your parents real cause for grief that would be quite another thing. Now, I frequently see mothers and fathers cry at the station when their sons are being led away to the penitentiary. But deep down in their hearts your mother and father are proud of what you are doing. And the pride they feel is one reason for their tears. They may cry now and they have a right to cry . . . They have lived their lives . . . Now it is up to you to live yours . . . They expect it to be a fine life . . . They realize that a Christ is not born in every family."

It was not until later that I fully appreciated what knowledge of the human heart was back of those words. He had wished to derail my thoughts from their single, gloomy track. By his first challenge he had surprised my attention. And then with tactful indirection he had appealed to my pride. His last remark let a splendid burst of sunshine into what had been a very dark and cheerless world indeed.

After a few minutes he left me to attend to his porter's duties. But at various times during the all-day trip he would return to take up our conversation where it had been interrupted. Before long we were discussing religion. Not of my faith, he was a deeply religious man with a profound respect for the Church and her priests. At one point he said, "At the very outset of your religious life, be sincere with yourself. If you find that you still hanker for the world, either put that hankering aside decisively, or return to the world. You can't serve two masters. But once you have made up your mind, don't falter. Give the best that's in you. The very best, mind you! Primitive tribes used to offer human sacrifices to God. When they did they felt that only their most beautiful maidens were worthy to be offered. Even in their ignorance they sensed that God would be satisfied only with the best. Certainly, son, you'll never be content with half-measures."

And somewhere in his remarks he used an illustration as apt and forceful as any I have ever heard. "A really good musician," he said, "becomes master of his instrument. The violinist makes the violin a part of himself and while he plays he never adverts to the fact that it is something distinct. Through the violin, as naturally as if it were his own voice, he expresses every shade of emotion exactly as he feels it. Now your vocation is the instrument and you must become

the master musician. Make your priesthood a part of yourself."

During the course of the long trip we talked for several hours. His duties took him away from time to time, but he would return to explain a point more clearly or to introduce a new topic. My views were new to him. Meeting a prospective religious was a new experience. It was clear to him that I welcomed his company and found his remarks fresh and inspiring. He grasped the opportunity to learn and to teach.

Simply and without bitterness he told me of the tremendous handicaps faced by the Negroes in their efforts to make a living. He was a college graduate as were all the porters on the train. In those depression days a college diploma had become a practical requirement for a porter's job. While we were on the subject of education he said, "You will receive a splendid training in all the fields of learning and living. But you can't depend merely on what's given you. You must think! Remember that. You must think!" That advice, coupled with the evidence he gave of having followed it himself, is a perfect summation of his own remarkable character. Only long hours of quiet reflection and constant probing of human problems and human values could account for the shrewd, penetrating observations he made. With college as a starting point he had gone on to educate himself—literally to cultivate and enrich his mind and heart.

When I was about to leave the train we shook hands, and his parting words were, "Have clean ideas. Be fair and square with yourself and with your fellows, with Protestants and Jews as well as with Catholics. Remember there are sincere clergymen in the ranks of all denominations."

I have often pondered over what he told me and especially over the deep human sympathy that prompted him to take such a personal interest in a total stranger. I never met him again, but I hope that his words have left their mark upon my life. I do know that scornful, intolerant remarks about those of a different race or creed invariably bring to mind the picture of that porter. With an angry, indignant reply already upon my lips I hear his quiet, wise, tolerant words and I try to meet the charge as I think he would meet it. And the way he would answer, it seems to me, is always surprisingly like the way the carpenter Sage of Galilee would answer.

# AS YOUTH SEES IT

EDITED BY YOUTH

On Sunday, March 15th, it was my privilege to attend another of the Communion Breakfasts sponsored by the Catholic Laymen's Union of the Catholic Interracial Council. The guests, on this occasion, were the members of the Irish-American Interracial Committee.

It would be the usual (and the easy) thing to write an account of this function, mentioning names, giving summaries of speeches delivered. Yet personalities, important and necessary as they are, must lose their individual identities and become one in the single identity of a great Faith and a great Cause.

Among the men and women gathered in Old St. Peter's on that Sunday were Negroes and white men active in many different professions: some members of the legal profession, others working in fields of social and labor legislation. Yet here one was aware of only one supreme profession, the profession which each of us took on at Baptism with the words: *Credo in unum Deum* . . .

Much has been said about the persecution of the Negro in this and other countries . . . and more than rightly so. But many of us have forgotten that the Irish race, too, has been a long-suffering and persecuted race. Sitting at breakfast with this friendly, this strongly bonded-together group, it was comforting and encouraging to realize how a people which had been able, through perseverance and struggle, to overcome oppression and opposition, was now uniting in an effort to help another persecuted people gain its rightful freedom.

Too often, the man who has won riches over poverty is unable to understand the poverty of others. So it is with the persecuted: when a man has succeeded in throwing off the yoke of persecution, he so quickly forgets his own suffering as to be unable to sympathize with others in their oppression. Although, logically, tolerance should grow out of the experience of intolerance, this is too seldom the case. It is, therefore, gratifyingly surprising to find this active group of Irish-American Catholics banding together in the cause of intolerance. Yet, are we not, all of us, victims of some form of intolerance? Was it not because of some kind of persecution: religious, economic, racial, that all of our forefathers came to this free country?

Indeed, it is a commendable thing to find groups banded together, impelled by a search for personal justice to all men. It must be a God-inspired and God-directed thing. Yet there must be some strange lack in our civilization, when we must find ourselves surprised to see men so united. If our viewpoint had not originally undergone some hideous distortion—a perversion whereby we lost sight of that basic equality of

all men on which our Faith and our Nation were founded—such movements as that for Interracial Justice would not be necessary.

These, and many other, thoughts ran through my head at that Communion Breakfast on Sunday, March 15th. It was a happy and a hopeful and a Christ-like gathering.

It was only natural that one's thoughts should turn to the part which Youth can play in this struggle against intolerance. The future of any great movement lies in the training of Youth to take its active place in that movement.

A great many burdens of the future rest, even now, on the shoulders of American Youth. But unless that Youth is fortified with Christian truth and the courage to make that truth a world-reality, it cannot be expected to shoulder those burdens.

It is true that a great part of our Youth is being trained in the practical truth of the God-Man and his Catholic Church.

Yet a surprisingly large part of our Youth is not being so educated; some, even, is imbibing the bigotry of its parents and teachers.

What is to be done about this neglected body of our Youth? It becomes the responsibility, first and above all, of the Catholic-trained Youth, to join in concerted action of so direct and dauntless a calibre that bigotry and indifference and intolerance among its own generation cannot survive.

And it becomes the responsibility of the adult generation—groups such as the Irish-American Interracial Committee and the Catholic Laymen's Union and the Catholic Interracial Council, to interest this Catholic Youth in practical movements such as their own: so that they may take their place in an adult world of the future, equipped and experienced to fight the blindness and hatred out of which spring dictatorship and atheistic totalitarianism.

It is well to thank God for such meetings as this Communion-Breakfast. But it is still better to pray to God for more such meetings, in more cities of these United States. It is never for any of us to be satisfied.

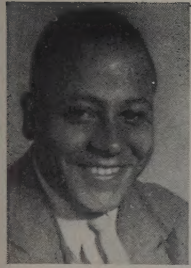
For as the thirst of a Cross-raised Christ is infinite, quenchless—so should our ambition to see the entire peopled universe made one by the bonds of that very Cross be infinite and insatiable.

It is this spirit which is truly American—this spirit which, alone, begets peace.

Without it, all armies are lost, all seas unfathomable. Without it, there can be no end of war—only that truce wherein men gather new strength for future wars.

The right to the only Peace worth possessing was won for us nineteen hundred years ago. The preservation of our right to that Peace should be our only impetus to Battle: loss of that right our only defeat.

—M. McCORMACK



## PLAYS And A Point Of View

By THEOPHILUS LEWIS

### THE JIM CROW GESTURE

It is a curious fact that when a man who has been bigoted all his life and becomes half converted to tolerance his first effort to deal fairly with his fellowmen is often less logical, and causes more resentment, than his former bigotry. Secretary of the Navy Knox is a conspicuous example.

For years the enlisted personnel of the Navy has been recruited and organized on a Jim Crow basis. All Negroes inducted into the Navy were assigned to steward's service, meaning that colored sailors were not sailors but sea-going valets, waiters and bootblacks. The few Negroes nominated for cadetships at Annapolis, where practically all Naval officers prior to the current war were trained, were either denied admission to the school or flunked out on the second or third or thirty-third preliminary examination. Since colored youths have earned degrees in virtually every university above and beyond the Mason and Dixon line, their compatriots cannot understand why some super-brilliant Negro candidate has not managed to pass the Annapolis exams. Or perhaps they do understand, or think they do. It is common talk among Negroes that colored youths nominated for Annapolis cadetships are "framed," given specially prepared examinations so tough that even a vice-admiral could not make creditable marks.

Before Pearl Harbor, Negroes, with their natural bent for facing the issues of life objectively, accepted the Jim Crow policy of the Navy as one of the evils of a world which at its best is far from perfect. But when our statesmen proclaimed a holy crusade to establish the principles of democracy "everywhere in the world," Negroes again with their propensity for bringing highfalutin oratory down to earth, began to ask when the United States Navy was going to start practicing enough democracy to enlist colored Americans on a manhood basis. They kept on asking until the question got under the skins of those who rule the Navy. Apparently they decided to do something about it.

So Secretary Knox stepped forward, with a roll of drums, a flourish of trumpets, and a salute of eighteen and a half tin whistles and announced that the Navy was going democratic. The Jim Crow policy of the Navy was being abolished, as of the date of his announcement; the color bars were being let down, from henceforth and forever after any American Negro willing to die for his country on the high seas would be accepted into the combat service of the United States Navy.

BUT, Negroes recruited for the Navy will be placed in the Naval RESERVE. After a training period under white petty officers they will be assigned to designated ships or mud scows for service at sea. IF, after an unspecified number of light years, any Negroes—only three or four times as brainy as Einstein are discovered—they May be commissioned as officers—to command colored Naval units, of course.

To give the Naval Secretary full credit it must be said that he performed with great aplomb and finesse. He simulated a man doing something decent so persuasively that he even fooled some Negro editors. But, believe it or not, he did not deceive the *New York Times*. The *Times* said his Jim Crow gesture was inadequate—not inadequate to Jim Crowism but inadequate in Americanism.

When Negro editors caught their breath and gave Knox's announcement a second reading they discovered the stinger in it. The substance of what Knox said is this:

For years the Jim Crow policy of the Navy has been tacit. Now it's official.

Knox's gesture is both infuriating and ridiculous—infuriating to men with a decent respect for Christian relationships among men, without regard to race or color, ridiculous because its basic assumptions run contrary to experience. Knox is afraid that white and colored American seamen performing similar duties would not get along together any too well. He is afraid that white yeomen would resent taking orders from colored officers. Nuts. White and colored men work together in offices, factories and on construction jobs. White and colored women work together in pants factories. They take orders from foremen of either race. Is Knox privy to the inner mysteries of some occult science which informs him that whites and blacks cannot fight together as well as work together?

Just five minutes ago I had a shot of whiskey beside a white sailor. He did not bite me and I did not bite him. He did not resent my presence in the saloon or demand that the bartender explain why he served a Negro in a tavern where all the other patrons were white. I don't think he would protest if I were assigned to the bunk next to his in the glory hole of a destroyer or happened to be a member of his gun crew. Most white people I have known were too sensible for that sort of nonsense. Secretary Knox is old enough to know the facts of life.

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## FROM HERE AND THERE DURING THE MONTH

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### ● MOTHER KATHARINE DREXEL HONORED BY HAITI PRESIDENT

Cornwells Heights, Pa., March 28.—Mother M. Katharine Drexel, Foundress of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People, was the recipient of an unusual honor today, when President Elie Lescot of the Republic of Haiti conferred upon her the rank of Commander of the

National Haitian Order of Honor and Merit. The citation and medal were personally presented by President Lescot.

Accompanied by his secretary, Daniel Heurtelou, and by Elie Garcia secretary of the Haitian Legation in Washington, and Col. Philippe Cham, Aide-de-Camp, and Lt. Roger Lescot, Aide-de-Camp, the President journeyed from Washington to the Motherhouse of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament here.

An unusual ceremony accompanied the presentation. The Foundress sat in the midst of the Motherhouse community assembled in the convent parlor where the American, Papal and Haitian flags were displayed. The address of welcome was given in French by the Rev. Joseph Pobleschek, C.S.S., who paid tribute to the spirit of religious zeal evidenced by President Lescot in his native land and the good will he had shown to representatives of religion.

The presentation speech of President Lescot paid glowing tribute to Mother Katharine's work for the members of the Colored race, declaring that only Heaven could fully recompense the labors of her community actuated by so selfless a motive and consecrated to so sincere a devotion to the highest interests of Colored people.

Mother Katharine founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People 51 years ago. The congregation today numbers 460 Sisters who labor in 36 missions located in 18 States. This American community carries on a far-flung missionary, educational, social, and catechetical program in the Home Mission Fields of America among the Indians and Colored People.

## ● HAITIAN PRESIDENT VISITS ST. EMMA'S A. & I. INSTITUTE

Rock Castle, Va., April 3.—President Elie Lescot of the Republic of Haiti was guest of the Benedictine Fathers of St. Emma's Industrial and Agricultural Institute here Sunday.

Welcomed by the Rev. Frederick Strittmatter, O.S.B., Director of the Institute, President Lescot was paid full military honors by the Institute's Cadet Corps. Max Lescot, son of the President, is a student at the Institute, and the visit brought him a reunion with his father and a brother, Lt. Roger Lescot, who is a member of the President's party in his sojourn in the United States.

On President Lescot's arrival, the Cadet Corps of the Institute escorted him to the reviewing stand for parade, offered the facilities for inspection of the troops and after the parade executed a number of Army drills.

The President and his party, the cadets and the girls from St. Francis de Sales High School here attended Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament after the field exercises.

## ● 10 HOLDERS OF BIG WAR CONTRACTS ORDERED TO CEASE DISCRIMINATION

Washington, April 12.—Ten industrial concerns holding millions of dollars in war contracts were ordered today by the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice to cease discriminating against available workers because of their race or religion.

Committee officials said that failure to comply could mean

that the Government might claim contract violation. The firms could be fined, it was said, or in severe cases, not involving critical war materials, contracts could be suspended.

The complaints included allegations that several companies refused to employ Negroes or Jews, or both, but chiefly the former; that they had given restrictive orders to public or private employment agencies, asking for only white or only Gentile workers, that they had advertised in newspapers for help and specified "Gentile," "Protestant" or "white," or that they had refused to give workers of specified races or creeds opportunity for promotion in keeping with their qualifications.

The companies for the most part denied that they were discriminating, but in each case the committee found evidence supporting the charges.

## ● COLUMNIST WARNS AMERICA OF ATTITUDE TOWARD NEGRO

A warning to white America that it must have sincere and radical change of heart in its attitude toward its Negro citizens is given by William Hickey, top-flight columnist of Lord Beaverbrook's *Daily Express* in the latest issue of *Life* magazine, in his article "Report on America."

Hickey says: "I know that this problem is practically taboo among many of my white American friends. They dispose of it with a few stock phrases which comfortably justify discrimination. Nevertheless, having studied Negro newspapers and talked informally with many Negroes, I am convinced that at least a sincere gesture, or at least a radical, nationwide change of heart was needed to ensure total Negro cooperation in the war effort and to immunize America's 13,000,000 colored folk against effective and subtle enemy propaganda."

# BOOKS

## GALL AND HONEY

By EDWARD DOHERTY

"No cross, no crown." It is very understandable why Edward Doherty gave the title "*Gall and Honey*" to his autobiography. His fascinating and intensely human account of his life, especially as a newspaperman, is chock full of the 'gall' of human grief, frustration and suffering, both mental and physical. But the 'honey' he speaks of is the glimpse of happiness where despair and disappointment are crowned with triumph in his return to the faith of his father. It is the spiritual re-awakening from a slumber wherein he sees "there is great joy in heaven over the repentance of a sinner."

I am always assured of the pleasure or pain of reading a book after I have read through the first paragraph and the last. In this instance I looked for a captivating story and I was not disappointed. Mr. Doherty begins the story of his life

with the statement: "When the last sun has set for me, and the first faint star of eternity light my way into the night, let no one grieve." Then he ends with a truly Catholic spirit: "It seemed to me that Blessed Martin was somewhere around, with the Little Flower, rejoicing. . . . Let me say there is great joy on earth—as well as great joy as this particular sinner has ever known." This sounds so much like the Confessions of St. Augustine.

Experience that would break the heart of the average man in his outlook on life amidst the tragedy of death, seemed to have given courage to Doherty to be a newspaperman of the first rank. He is industry itself; he loves the noble and the beautiful, and he seeks to translate into his writings—whether it be the story of a murder, a robbery or an accident—the human touch which pulls the heartstring or stirs the emotion. But whatever he writes about, good newspaperman that he is, he tells the truth and tells it well.

In one assignment he became acquainted with the life of The Little Flower, whose autobiography both Doherty and his wife read with much pleasure and benefit. Again he was commissioned to investigate the life story of Blessed Martin de Porres, the Peruvian Negro, whose saintly career as a member of the Dominican Order, merited recognition by the Catholic Church.

The Irish tradition of an indomitable spirit, a deep spiritual nature with a will to do or die are all characterized in a marked degree in *Gall and Honey*—E. A. R.

— EDITORIAL OF THE MONTH —

THE NEGRO AND THE NAVY

Secretary Knox's announcement that Negroes are henceforth to be enlisted in naval and marine units, and that they may expect to be promoted according to merit to noncommissioned ranks is good as far as it goes. The unhappy undertone in this new policy is its admission that the Navy has heretofore made racial distinctions, for which no warrant can be found in the Constitution, the statutes of the democratic traditions of the United States. We all know the practical reason given for the previous, and to some extent still existing, discrimination. This is that life on shipboard is intimate and that friction between white sailors and Negro sailors might hurt discipline. It may be a good reason and it may not. We believe there are numerous American seamen, of white and of Negro blood, whose loyalty and patriotism would rise above prejudice.

There has never been in recent years any good reason why some units of the fleet should not be manned and officered by colored sailors. The Negro has come far enough to furnish all the training and experience necessary. He has always had the fighting qualities. A fugitive Negro slave led the attack on British soldiers that resulted in the Boston Massacre. Negroes fought with distinction in the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War, the Spanish War and the First World War. If this nation is faithful to its democratic principles, they will have the opportunity to fight in this war, by sea as by land, and to be ranked according to their worth as individuals—*New York Times*.

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"This detestable myth does not exist only in Germany, or only in Europe. It flourishes here in the United States, and has flourished here, at the expense of 13 million loyal American citizens. Today the Negro faces innumerable restrictions, denials and discriminations in violation of his natural rights, as a man and as a citizen. He is still seeking to secure the essential opportunities of life and the full measure of social justice.

"The participation in the interracial movement of so many men and women of Irish birth or ancestry is positive proof of that dynamic spirit of contemporary Christianity to which I have referred. We not only challenge racism. We not only condemn it. We pledge ourselves to fight it with every honest and legitimate weapon until we have finally licked this infamous thing."

—From article in this issue "*The Christian Crisis*"

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